Upgradation of Agricultural Export Zones

3868. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

whether Government is aware that many Agricultural Export Zones in the country are not fully operational due to the lack of processing facilities and other necessary equipments;

if so, whether Government have taken any action for upgradation of Agricultural Export Zones;

if so, the details thereof and fiscal allocation by Government during the last three years, State-wise; and

if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Based on the recommendations of a peer evaluation of the existing Agri Export Zones (AEZs), a remedial action plan for coordinating and monitoring the progress of AEZs, and short listing of a few AEZs for special focus has been adopted. 16 projects in 4 AEZs (flowers in Sikkim, mango in Andhra Pradesh, pineapple in West Bengal and ginger in Assam) with an outlay of Rs 48.85 crore have been approved under the Assistance to States for creating Infrastructure for the Development and Growth of Exports (ASIDE) Scheme. The Government does not make any separate financial allocation for projects in the AEZs. The AEZs meet their financial requirements from the ongoing schemes of Central and State Agricultural Departments.

Objectives of Export Resources Zones

†3869. SHRI BANWARILAL KANCHHAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

the main objectives of Export Resources Zones;

whether these zones get raw material at international prices; and

if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) There is no scheme existing as Export Resources Zones. However, the objectives of the Special Exonomic Zones (SEZs) Act, 2005 which came into force from 10th February, 2006 and is administered by the Department of Commerce are: (i) Generation of additional economic activity; (ii) Promotion of exports of goods and services; (iii) Promotion of investment from domestic and foreign sources; (iv) creation of employment opportunities and (v) development of infrastructure facilities. Incentives and facilities offered to 5>EZs include duty free import/domestic procurement of goods for development, operation and maintenance of SEZ units and exemptions from Central Sales Tax, Service Tax; State sales tax and other levies as extended by the respective State Governments.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi